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A KARSHUNI TEXT OF
THE LEGEND OF MAR ASIA¹

BY

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Arabic transcription of the karshuni version of the legend of Mar Asia	130
The legend of Mar Asia	147
Translation	147
Dedication	147
Mar Asia's miraculous birth	148
Abba Marcus names Mar Asia	149
Mar Asia rejects marriage	150
Mar Asia begins his journey	151
Mar Asia reaches Jerusalem	153
Mar Asia and Mar Domitius	153
Mar Asia arrives in Apamea	156
Mar Asia in Gandaris	158
Mar Asia and the Persian prince	159
Other miracles of Mar Asia	159
The final days of Mar Asia	161

1) Abbreviations:

NAU, *Résumé* = NAU, François, "Résumé de monographies syriaques," *ROC*, Tome 10 (20), 1915-1917.

PAYNE-SMITH, *Thesaurus* = Robert PAYNE-SMITH, *Thesaurus syriacus*, 2 volumes, (Oxonii: E typographeo Clarendoniano, 1879-1901), reprint at Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1981.

In 1915 Nau published a summary of the life of a little known saint known as Mar Asia². His source (of which he presents some sections in Syriac with a translation) was a manuscript in the British Library (add. 12174) which had been written in 1197 AD. As far as I have been able to determine, that text is the principle attestation of the life and/or legend of Mar Asia, although his name appears in Assemani's catalog and also in the *Chronicon*³.

In 1999 I [Wilson] was involved in digitizing Syriac and Arabic texts in Lebanon, and the Syrian Orthodox Bishop, His Grace George Saliba, graciously allowed me and my co-workers to digitize a few manuscripts which he had in his possession in Lebanon (most manuscripts had already been moved to Damascus by that time). I recently began perusing one of those manuscripts and found a Karshuni text on Mar Asia, which corresponds to the Syriac texts that had been treated almost a century ago by Nau. The fact that the text is now attested in two languages may suggest that veneration of this saint was not a purely local and isolated phenomenon. And in a recent communication, P. Samir Khalil has informed me that four additional manuscripts are known which deal with Mar Asia⁴.

Very little is known about this figure, apart from the information in the above-mentioned text, but P. Chelbli, a Maronite priest, mentioned a village in the Batroun district of Lebanon where there were the remains of a temple from the Syro-Roman period, which the people of the village called Mar Asia, and he also noted that the saint was mentioned in the synaxarion of the Syrian churches. But he believed that the temple was never used for Christian services and he was inclined to think that the name of the temple as well as the name of the village (i.e. "Asia") recalled a cult of Aesculapius, since "Asia" means "physician", and Aesculapius was known in that region⁵.

While Chelbli's note may be of passing geographic interest, it does not help us further in the identification of Mar Asia: especially if his assumption about the connection with Aesculapius is correct, in which case the name "Asia" was applied to Aesculapius and had nothing at all to do with our saint.

2) NAU, *Résumé*, pp. 3-32.

3) The details on these references are given by Robert PAYNE-SMITH in his *Thesaurus Syriacus*, sub *Asia*.

4) Vat. Sbath 391, Sinai ar 523, 3 and Sharfeh syr 11/6, 31 and 11/24, 10.

5) Pierre CHEBLI, "Notes archéologiques : Recueillies dans le district de Botrys-Batroun (Mont Liban)", *Revue Biblique*, tome 10, No. 4, October 1901, p. 591.

There was an identification of Asia, mentioned centuries ago by Assemani⁶, which appears in a Syriac text⁷ and equates him with Saint Pantaleon. Nau, however, rejects that identification, noting that the Pantaleon material is of Greek origin, whereas the material on St. Asia is (in his opinion) of Syriac origin⁸. The very name “Asia” (= “physician”) would seem to support that contention. Moreover, several aspects of the two saints do not match. For example, the names of the parents: the parents of Asia were named Pantheros and Gorgonia⁹, whereas the parents of Pantaleon were Eustorgios and Eubula. The emperors under which they served, and hence the dates, do not match. Pantaleon was active under the Emperor Maximianus, whom he served as court physician, and he was martyred around 305 AD. Asia, on the other hand, was active during the reign of Theodosius I (379-395), long after the time of Pantaleon. Furthermore, their places of origin differ, Pantaleon being from Nicomedia while Asia, according to the Karshuni text, was from Paria. Both were physician-saints, but that is where the similarity ends.

The Saliba manuscript was approximately 15x9 cm¹⁰, and contained 114 pages (i.e. 57 leaves written on both sides) of texts written in Karshuni, i.e. Arabic language in Syriac script. The Mar Asia text was the first text in the book and was 42 pages long. Each page contains 16 lines as a rule. The digital images of the entire manuscript may be obtained from the Center for the Preservation of Ancient Religious Texts at Brigham Young University¹¹, and it is with their permission that we are publishing this text.

The text describes a barren couple who go to the temple of John the Baptist to pray for offspring, and they are miraculously granted a son. When he is of age, they arrange a marriage for him, but he believes he has a higher calling, so he sets out on a pilgrimage which takes him to Jerusalem. He then meets Mar Domitius, who has lions which have been serving him. Mar Domitius dies and the lions dig the grave in a cave, where Mar Asia then buries him. Mar Asia then returns from his wilderness sojourn and performs miracles in various places, finally dying himself after having built a monastery in Antioch.

6) Locus also mentioned in the *Thesaurus Syriacus* sub “Asia”.

7) Cited by Nau in *ROC X* (1915-1917), p. 17, note 1 as being found in *Patrologia Orientalis*, X, p. 61, note 21.

8) *ROC X* (1915-1917), p. 17, note 1.

9) The name of the father appears in the Syriac version, but not in the Karshuni version. In the latter version the name of the mother is (understandably) Jurjunia.

10) Unfortunately, the metadata file containing the exact measurements became corrupted and cannot be read.

11) Contact Kristian Heal.

The Arabic transcription is not an exact transliteration. The original syntax was preserved as far as possible, so that, for example, no attempt was made to correct initial verbs from plural to singular in order to bring the grammar into line with currently accepted standards. In that respect, this text will reveal some peculiarities of grammar. But the spelling of words in Karshuni presented some difficulty. For example the *hamza*, which is required for the correct spelling of many words in Arabic, was handled a bit differently in the Karshuni. Hence, if a word such as هؤلاء were transliterated precisely from the Karshuni, it would be written هؤلاءي. Therefore, the orthography was brought into line with accepted standards. In some cases, it could be argued that in correcting the spelling, we also corrected the grammar, as for example in 7B line 7 where the Karshuni وصعدون was corrected to وصعدوا in the Arabic transcription. But this was a grey area and a judgment call which we made in order to at least present correct Arabic spelling as far as possible. In a similar fashion, the *ta marbuTa* is often represented in the Karshuni text by ت, so that was changed to ة. Also, the Karshuni text uniformly uses a final *alef* in words where the Arabic requires a *ya*, so the latter was used in the transcription. Certain of the Karshuni diacritical marks were also problematic, and therefore were not reproduced faithfully in the Arabic transcription. Again, accepted Arabic usage was preferred.

In terms of the translation, it is fairly literal, but not slavishly literal to the point of making the English very awkward. I did the initial translation and the final editing, but between those two processes, Sahar Qumsiyeh made corrections, both to the Arabic transcription and also to some of the translated passages. Nevertheless, there remained certain passages which were a bit awkward and ambiguous, and we beg the readers pardon for any such ambiguity which may have persisted in the final translation.

In the following pages, the Arabic text will be presented first, followed by the English translation. The section headings do not appear in the original text. They were added by us to make for smoother reading.

The text begins with image 004B, and therefore the image numbers (abbreviated and in brackets) will be used in this article so that they can be more easily compared to the original photos. The lines will be numbered within each page so that they may be located within the images if anyone wishes to do that. The image numbers will be in bold to distinguish them from the page numbers. Since the images contain double pages, the letter A or B will also be added to the image number to indicate whether the page on the right side of the image is indicated (A), or on the left side (B).

ARABIC TRANSCRIPTION
OF THE KARSHUNI VERSION
OF THE LEGEND OF MAR ASIA

[4B]

تقدمة

باسم الاب والابن وروح
القدس اله واحد
✱ آمين ✱

(١) نبتدي بعون الله تعا-^{١٢} (٢) وحسن توفيقه : ونكتب (٣) قصّة القديس الطاهر (٤) النقيس مار اسيا^{١٣} (٥) الحكيم الروماني: صلاته (٦) وبركاته تحرص جميعنا امين (٧) نصعد المجد لصاحب المجد : الذي (٨) خلق هذا العالم بنعمته : وقد (٩) زينّه بجميع محاسنة الجميلة : (١٠) المخلوقه : وجعل الانسان يتردد (١١) ويسكن بهذه الدنيا : ومن بعد [5A] (١) خروجه من الفردوس النعيم فصارت (٢) الدنيا محل ومسكن لعمره الزماني. (٣) ليس تردداً عظيم قديم كان لنا (٤) هذا العالم : بل لما صرنا غربا (٥) من بلدنا القديم : لقينا الى هذا (٦) عالم الشقاء والضيق : من اجل (٧) الخطيه التي تولّت علينا بجواز (٨) المرسوم : لاجل هذا صار كل واحد (٩) من الابرار القدماء : وكان يتدبّر (١٠) بالعفه والطهاره : في هذه (١١) حيات الوقتيه والعمر الزماني : (١٢) وكمّلوا باعمال الفضائل : وصاروا (١٣) ورثا واولاد لذلك العالم الروحاني : (١٤) مسكن القديم الذي لا يزول ولا (١٥) يحوّل : وهم اليوم يترددون في (١٦) الملكوت : ويتنعمون في خيراته. [5B] (١) الذي لا تنتهي : ولا تنقضي الى ابد (٢) الابدن امين ✱

12) In the original there is a line above the word to indicate an abbreviation. In the transcription, I was not able to reproduce that with the available fonts, so I will instead place a line beside the word to indicate an abbreviation.

ولادة مار آسيا العجيبة

يا اخوتي اريد اقصّ (٣) لكم قصة القديس النفيس مار (٤) اسيا^١ الحكيم : رجل
العظيم العجب : (٥) وكيف كان تدبير حياته من الله : (٦) وكيف انتجبه الرب من
بطن امه : (٧) فكان هذا القديس من جنس عظيم : (٨) وقبيلة كبيرة : وكان من
مدينة (٩) الآفاريه العظيمة : وكان ابوه (١٠) رجلاً خائف الله : معروفاً مسماً (١١)
عند الملك المؤمن ثاوذوسيوس : (١٢) الكبير مشيد الامانة : الخائف من (١٣) الله :
وكان اسم امه جورجونيا : (١٤) وكانوا اثنيهم اتقيا قدام الله : (١٥) وكان تدبيرهم
بالبراره : وليس (١٦) كان لهم ولد : لانهم كانوا عواقر : [6A] (١) وكانوا في غماً
وحزن عظيم حتى (٢) لم يكون من يرثهم : لانهم كانوا (٣) صاحبين مالاً عظيماً جداً :
وكانوا كل (٤) يوم يقربون التخذع^{١٣} والطلبة : (٥) مع القرايين والنذور لله.
ويسالهم(?) (٦) حتي يعطيهم ثمرة واحدة : حتي (٧) تتسلى بها في هذا العالم : ويكون
(٨) لهم وارثاً من بلدهم : وفي بعض (٩) الايام صار لهم فكر ان يمضون ويصلون
(١٠) في هيكل مار يوحنا المعمدان : (١١) فقاموا ومضوا : ومعهم نذوراً (١٢)
وقرايين : وكحسب عادتهم : ولما (١٣) وصلوا الى هيكل القديس مار (١٤) يوحنا
المعمدان : ودخلوا في بعض (١٥) من القسوس الذي كان يخدم في (١٦) ذلك المكان
الشريف : فكان رجل صاحب [6B] (١) خير وقبلهم بفرح وسرور : وراحهم (٢)
من تعبهم وشقاهم من الطريق : (٣) ومن بعد ما استراحوا قاموا الصالحين (٤) وجازوا
الى هيكل مار يوحنا : (٥) ورفعوا ايدهم الى السماء : وصلوا (٦) قدام الله بقلباً
طاهر : ودموعاً (٧) مره : وقدموا طلبه نقيه لله (٨) وهم يتضرعون ويقولون : أيها
الرب (٩) الصالح الراووف : اسمع صوت عبيدك (١٠) الخاطئين : واستجيب لنا سؤالنا :

(١١) من خزائنك الممتلئة غناء ورحمات : (١٢) واعطى لعبيدك ثمرة : لكيما (١٣) تستريح به لاهوثك : لانك (١٤) رحوم وكثير الرحمة : ومنك (١٥) يخرجوا جميع المسائل الحسنة : (١٦) واخرجوا ثياب الذهب : الذي كان (7A) (١) قد جابوا معهم نذوراً. واعطوا (٢) لذلك القسيس : وطلبوا منه ان (٣) يقوم معهم في الصلاة قدام الله : (٤) ثلاثة ايام وثلاثة ليالى : في ذلك (٥) الهيكل المقدس : يقدمون التضضيع (٦) والطلبة الى الله تعا- : ومن بعد (٧) الثلاثة ايام : ارادوا ان يرجعوا الى (٨) مدينتهم : اجابهم ذلك القسيس : (٩) وقال لهم : امضوا يا اخوتي بالسلام : (١٠) الرب الذي جتتم على رجاءه : هو (١١) يعطيكم مثل ايمانكم : وانا اعلم : (١٢) ان الى هاهنا معكم ثمرة الفرح : (١٣) والسرور : وصلا عليهم ثمرة البار : (١٤) ومضوا الى مدينتهم بالفرح : وكان (١٥) بيتهم راحة الغربا والمساكين : (١٦) لانهم كانوا خائفين الله تعا- جداً [7B] (١) وكانوا شديدين الايمان : ولم يميلون (٢) من الحق : وكانوا شبه ابراهيم (٣) رئيس الالباء : الذي كان مينا ومحل (٤) الغرباء ومنذاقين الارواح : ومن بعد (٥) كمال السنة كمل الحمل : وصار (٦) لهم ولداً :

أنبا مرقوس يُسمّى مار آسيا

وارادوا الصالحين ان (٧) يحملون ولدهم : وصعدوا الى (٨) هيكل القديس مار يوحنا المعمدان : (٩) لكيما يعطوه رسم المعمودية : (١٠) ورشم الميرون المقدس : وكان واحد (١١) متوحداً في جبل سيني : وكان مزين (١٢) في اعمال الالهيه : وكان قد أهل (١٣) الى درجة عاليه : وكان اسمه (١٤) انبا مرقوس : قيل له من الله (١٥) ان يمضي الى عند الطفل : ويسمى (١٦) اسمه : وحينئذاً يرد الى مسكنه : [8A] (١) وبينما هو القديس انبا مرقوس : (٢) مفتكر ماذا يدعى اسمه : قال له (٣) الله بصوت رفيع طيّب : ان اسيا⁺ (٤) اعني حكيم يدعا الطفل : لانه مختار (٥) هو لي : وجرائع وايات

وشفاء كثير : (٦) انا معد ان اجعل على يديه : ويظهر (٧) اسمه في جميع الارض :
 انظر لا (٨) تبلى : حينئذ قام القديس انبا (٩) مرقوس : ومضا عاجلاً فوجد (١٠)
 الصبي جالس على سريرة : فانكب (١١) عليه واعطاه السلام : وامتلاً ذلك (١٢)
 البيت كله نوراً : وقال لوالدا (١٣) الصبي ان هذا الطفل يدعا اسمه (١٤) حكيم : لان
 الله معد ان يصنع على (١٥) يده : ايات وجرائح وشفاء عظيم : (١٦) انظروا ها قد
 سبقتُ واعلمتكم : [8B] (١) ورجع الى موضعه الذي كان يسكن (٢) به : فاما والديه
 قاموا واخذوا (٣) الصبي : وصعدوا الى هيكل القديس (٤) مار يوحنا المعمدان : ومعهم
 نذوراً (٥) وقرابين كثيره : واعطوا هناك (٦) المعمودية : ورسم الميرون المقلّس : (٧)
 وكان الصبي ينشأ بقوة الله : (٨) وعلموه والديه الكتابة والمزامير : (٩) وكان مار
 اسيا^١ : يتفطن ويتفهم : (١٠) من الله الذي انتجبه : اكثر من (١١) ارفاقه : حتى كُلماً
 ينظره : كان (١٢) يتعجب من علمه :

مار آسيا يرفض الزواج

ومن بعد ما (١٣) كبر الصبي : وصار ابن خمسة عشر (١٤) سنة : ارادوا والديه
 ان يزوجه : (١٥) كمثّل سنة البيعة المقدسة : (١٦) مضوا الى عند الناس اكابر رؤساء :
 [9A] (١) وملّكه على ابنة اوفرخا : اعنى والى (٢) المدينة الذي هو كبير مسمماً قدام (٣)
 الملوك : وكانت الصبية حسنة (٤) المنظر جداً : وكان اسمها آرونيّا : (٥) ولما ارادوا ان
 يصنعوا له العرس (٦) الناموسي : حينئذ روح القدس (٧) الذي كان قد انتجبه من بطن
 امه : (٨) حرّكت القديس شبه النار التي (٩) تنقّد : وافتكر في نفسه : وقال (١٠) ان
 شيء ما يدوم ليس هو بشياً : (١١) هكذا قام متجبراً : وبغض هذا (١٢) العالم وجميع
 شهواته : وعاشق (١٣) محبة الله وتبع وصاياه : وكان (١٤) يتنعم في مزامير داوود
 النبي كلّ (١٥) يوم وكل ساعة : ويستلذ بهم : (١٦) الذ واطيب من مطائب الملوك

في [9B] (١) فمهُ : وكان كل ساعه يقول : يا (٢) الله بك رجوتُ خلّصني : ومن جميع (٣) مضضة ديني اجيني : وطوبى لمن (٤) يخاف من الله ويحفظ مراسيمه : (٥) ولك يا رب رفعت نفسي : يا الهي (٦) بك استعنتُ لا انحجل : وكان في (٧) هؤلاء وما يشبه هؤلاء يتلوا وكان (٨) يتبقا في عالم الزائل : وكانوا عنده (٩) جميع من ينظر في العالم يشبه (١٠) المنام : ومثل عشب الحقل الذي (١١) يجف ويهلك : حينئذ قام عاجل (١٢) ومسرّع كمثّل الراقد الذي (١٣) ينتبه من النوم بسرعة شديدة : (١٤) خرج من بيت ابيه : واستقبل (١٥) الطريق : التي كان يريد حتى (١٦) تو > لو على عبد الجلل (intercalated script) > له قفر سر الخراب من المدينة :

مار آسيا يبدأ رحلته

[10A] (١) وهو لابس افخر الثياب : والاسورة (٢) التي لآولاً الملوك : وكمر الذهب (٣) في وسطه : متمنطق به : وهو (٤) مائن بالفصوص والجواهر المثمنة : (٥) ولما ابتعد عن مدينته ميلين : حينئذ (٦) برك على ركبتيه وصلى وقال : يا (٧) ايها الرب الاله الذي خلقت السماء (٨) والارض وجميع سكانها : ليس يكون (٩) بغرك ولا واحده : انت يا رب دبّرني (١٠) واهديني في طريقك المحي : وكن (١١) لي رفيقاً صالحاً في هذا الدرب (١٢) الجريب الذي خرجتُ ان اسلك به (١٣) على رجلك : وحيث تركتوا (sic) اهلتي (١٤) الجسدانيون : انت كمل معي هؤلاء : (١٥) والذي وجنسي وقبيلتي : انتقلت (١٦) في الجليل المقدّس : ان لم يترك [10B] (١) الانسان اباه وامه وابوته واولاده (٢) وامراته . ويكفر في نفسه ويحمل (٣) صليبه على كتفه ويتبعني : والا (٤) ليس يكون لي تلميذاً : والان يا ربي (٥) والهي مثل كلمتك ووعدك الصادق : (٦) الذي اولت في الانجيل : ها قد (٧) خرجتُ في وراك : وقولك المقدّس (٨) يدبرني ويهدينني في طريقك بلا (٩) عثره ولا خطية : حتى امجد (١٠) لاسمك

المقدّس الى ابد الابدین : (١١) ومن بعد ما كملّ القديس صلاته : (١٢) سار الى جانب البحر : الى مكان (١٣) تحلّ فيه المراكب : ودعا الى عند (١٤) المركباني : وقال له ايها الرجل (١٥) اريد منك ان تعبرني هذا البحر : (١٦) فنظر اليه المركباني : واخذه [11A] (١) العجب منه : وخاف من نظره له (٢) لانه اراه شبه اولاد الملوك : والكممر (٣) الذهب في وسطه : فقال في (٤) نفسه : ان هذا الصبي ابن ملوك هو : (٥) فتقدّم وسجد له وقال له يا سيدي : (٦) اريد منك ان تقول لي من اين انت (٧) وابن من انت ولا تخفي مني شيء : (٨) لان لباسك وشكلك يشبه لاولاد (٩) الملوك : ام ملك انت : ام من جنس (١٠) الملوك انت : حينئذ اجابه القديس (١١) مار اسيا⁺ وقال له : انا ما اقول (١٢) لك افعل : واما سؤالك عن من انا (١٣) ومن اين انا : ما لزمك ان تفتش : حينئذ (١٤) قال له صاحب المركب : تعلم يا (١٥) اخي اني انا انسان مسكين : وذهب (١٦) كثير هو اجرة السفينة : وكيف (١) [11B] اعمل : وانت تريد تعبر وحدك : وتضيع (٢) على اجرة السفينة : والان ابصر ايش (٣) تريد ان افعل قل لي حتى اعمل : (٤) اجابه القديس مار اسيا⁺ وقال له : (٥) ايها الرجل لا تخاف ليس اظلمك : ها (٦) هؤلاء ثيابي هم اكثر من اجرة (٧) السفينة بثلاث مرّة وازيد : ولي (٨) رجاء على سيدي(٩) : انك اذا ترجع يكون (٩) لك ربح اخر الذي كان يريد يكون لك : (١٠) حينئذ خلع ثيابه واعطاهم الى (١١) المركباني : واخر منه لقطهم ثياباً (١٢) خسيسه ولبسهم : واجاز وجلس (١٣) في السفينة وسار في البحر الى (١٤) لقا اورسليم : ولما وصل الى الميناء (١٥) اعنى الحمل الذي كان يريد : الا سيارة (١٦) كثيره تجار قد اتوا الى عند ذلك [12A] (١) الرجل المركباني : واعطوه الاجرة (٢) وداخلوا كل احماء لهم وجعلوها في (٣) السفينة : ولما ارادوا ان يسيروا : (٤) في البحر : دعا مار اسيا⁺ الى (٥) المركباني وكشف له على جميع (٦) ما كان قد قال له : وحضره ان لا (٧) يقول لاحد ان يجون والذي يسالون (٨) على لا اجهر لهم امري ليلا

ياكدون (٩) منك الذي اعطيتك : ويطلبوني منك (١٠) ومن بين يديك : انظر يا رجل
 كما قد (١١) حضرتك : وانا باري منك : لاني قد (١٢) اعلمتك بكل شيء : حينئذ
 افترق (١٣) وسار ومضى الى بيت المقدس وبعد (١٤) هذا جاءوا والديه مع فرسان
 كثيرة : (١٥) حتى يطلبونه ويجدونه : فلما لم (١٦) وجوه دعوا الى ذلك المركباني
 [12B] (١) وسالوه : رايت هاهنا شاباً لابس (٢) ثياباً ثمينه : فان كان تكشف لنا
 (٣) كبره نحن نعطيك ايش ما تطلب : (٤) فقط لا تخفي عنا : فاما المركباني (٥) ما
 جاز على كلمة القديس مار (٦) اسيا⁺ : اجاب وقال لهم : لا يا ساداتي (٧) ليس
 اعرف شيء مما تقولون لي (٨) عنه : ومع ايمان كثير تركوه (٩) ورجعوا : وهم حزينين
 باكين : فاما (١٠) والده القديس مار اسيا⁺ : لما (١١) سمعت ان ما قد وجدوا ولدها :
 (١٢) جعلت تنوح وتبكي طول زمانها (١٣) على فراق ولدها :

مار آسيا يصل إلى القدس

فاما القديس (١٤) مار آسيا⁺ : من بعد ما دخل الى (١٥) اورشليم : وصلى قي
 الموضع الذي كان (١٦) يتردد بها السيد المسيح : في [13A] (١) موضع الصلبوث :
 وفي قبر المقدس : (٢) والذي وُضع به : وحينئذ قبل (٣) هناك خمسة اشهر : وكان
 يتردد (٤) ويدور القدس موضعاً نزلت الغمامه (٥) على جبل سيني : وكان يدور
 دائماً : (٦) وكانت الدموع تجري من عينيه (٧) شبه الاعين الماي الذي تجري : (٨)
 مثل موسى عظيم الله الذي كان (٩) يكي على كسرة الشعب : هكذا (١٠) كان
 القديس مار اسيا⁺ : يتوسل (١١) الى الله ان يشيل ضربات الغضب (١٢) من العالم :
 المجد الذي اختار (١٣) برحمته وانتجب له انساناً (١٤) قديسين حتى يرضون لاهوته :
 (١٥) لهذا في زمان الشده وقصوات الضربات : (١٦) يلتجئون الناس في اعظامهم :
 [13B] (١) والان قد صار اسوار العالم : لاجل القوة (٢) الالهيه الساكنه بهم :

مار آسيا⁺ ومار ديميط⁺

ومن بعد (٣) عشرة سنين الذي صار لمار اسيا⁺ (٤) في هذا الجبل اراد الله ان (٥) ينقل القديس مار ديميط⁺ من هذا (٦) عالم الفاني الى عالم الباقي : (٧) حتى يستريح في منازل السرور : (٨) والفرحة المحفوظة له : ودعا (٩) مار ديميط⁺ لمار اسيا⁺ وقال له : (١٠) يا ولدي وصل يوم الذي اريد اخرج (١١) من هذا العالم : وقد ارسلك سيدنا (١٢) الى هاهنا حتى توارى جسدي (١٣) الضعيف : فالان ادن الي واعطيني (١٤) السلام : وابق بالسلام : وصلي (١٥) علي انا الضعيف : اجاب مار(ر) اسيا⁺ (١٦) وقال له : يا اخي اوارى جسديك [14A] (١) المعقر : لان ليس لنا هاهنا لا قدوم (٢) ولا مجرفة : وما يوجد شيء حتى (٣) احفر به : اجاب الشيخ وقال له : (٤) لاجل هذا الانر لا تهم : هو السيد (٥) المسيح يعد لك ما يجب : حينئذ (٦) اسلم روحه لله : فاما السباع الذي (٧) كان يخدمون مار ديميط⁺ : امرهم الله (٨) فجاءوا ودخلوا الى المغارة : مثل (٩) اناساً حزينين على فرقت مار ديميط⁺ : (١٠) كما اعطى الله : فعرقه في الحيوانات (١١) والطيور قي ذاهم حتى حيانون/يحانون(٩) اذا (١٢) ادوهم الناس في اولادهم : واذا (١٣) افترقوا من بعضهم بعض : هكذا (١٤) هؤلاء السباع حانوا : ايضاً كانوا يصيحون (١٥) ويحفرون بايديهم وارجلهم موضع (١٦) مثل غار : حتى يكون جسد القديس : [14B] (١) واما الطوباني مار اسيا⁺ : كان يتعجب (٢) منهم : وصلا عليه ثلاثة ايام وثلاثة (٣) ليالى : حينئذ جعله في الغار (٤) صنعوا السباع : ومن بعد ما كمل (٥) جميع فريضه : سد باب المغارة : (٦) ومضى الى مكانه : وهو حزين : وصاروا (٧) السباع ياتون اليه : كما كان ياتون : (٨) الى عند مار ديميط⁺ : فاما القديس (٩) مار اسيا⁺ : كان يزيد عمله كل يوم (١٠) وكانوا الشياطين ياتون اليه باشكال (١١) سمجه لكيما يجعلونه خائفاً مرعوباً (١٢)

هارباً : فكان يزجرهم بقوة الله : (١٣) وكان يهرهم من قدامه شبه الدخان : (١٤)
 وكانوا ياتون اليه بانواع انواع : (١٥) ويصيحون شبه الواويات : واصوات (١٦)
 قبيحه رديه : وكان يروونه اضويه [15A] (١) وشعاعات حتى يفزعونه هؤلاء (٢)
 الخجالي : فكان القدس يضحك عليهم : (٣) كم هم ضعفا مهينين : ولما كان (٤)
 يزجرهم وينتهرهم مثل الحشيش (٥) الذي يتبدد من قدام الريح العاصف : (٦) هكذا
 كانوا يتبددوا في الهواء من (٧) قدام كلمته القويه المقدسه : (٨) وكان يجي حسهم اه
 واه منك يا (٩) حكيم الروماني : من اين ارسلك (١٠) الناصري الينا : واما القديس
 مار (١١) اسيا⁺ : وكان نقول لهم المسيح (١٢) قوّت الله وحكمته : الذي غرق (١٣)
 الغون في البحر هو يغرمهم في (١٤) ظلمت البرانيه : التي هي معده (١٥) لفاعلين
 الشر : هكذا كان يبيدون ولم (١٦) ينظرون : وصار القديس مار اسيا⁺ [15B] (١) في
 ذلك الجبل : من بعد انتقال : (٢) القديس مار ديميط⁺ : خمسة عشر (٣) سنه :
 وراحه الرب من قتالات (٤) الشيطان : وصار في هدو وابتهاال (٥) عظيم :

مار آسيا يعود من البرية

ومن بعد ما صار هناك زمان (٦) طويل : وهو في جهاد عظيم : وكل (٧) يوم
 على عمله : وهو في عذاب شديد : (٨) مصلوب الليل والنهار قدام الله : (٩)
 والدموع تجري من عينيه شبه (١٠) المرازيب التي تسيل : وهو يتوسل (١١) الى الله
 ويطلب لاجل خطايا العالم : (١٢) ليس كان ياكل شئ غير عقاقير (١٣) الاثمار : التي
 كان تكون في الجبال : (١٤) حتى ييس جسده وجف من (١٥) العباده والتر من كل
 المواكيل : (١٦) حينئذ اراد الله ان يكشف امره [16A] (١) العالم : كما كان قد
 صارت النبوه (٢) عايه : اذ لم تستطيع مدينة تخفى (٣) الذي قد بنيت على راس جبل :
 (٤) كما قال السيد المسيح : ولما (٥) خرج من القفر مجا الى العالم : (٦) فجاء الى قرية

تدعاسندق : وشاع (٧) خيرُهُ في نواحي جبل سيني : ذاك (٨) الذي كان يسكنهُ :
فلما دخل الى (٩) القرية : اجتمعوا جميع اهلها (١٠) اليه : وهم حزانى باكين . فقالوا
(١١) لهُ يا ابونا صلي على قريتنا لانه (١٢) سنين كثيره ياتى البرد ويحنط (١٣)
الزرع : ويهلك الثمر : وعيشا (١٤) ردى نعيش : لآنا تخلينا من الجزل : (١٥)
والبوادر والمعاسر : اجاب القديس (١٦) مار اسيا^١ وقال لهم : هؤلاء [16B] (١)
الافات والضربات التي تصير في (٢) قريتكُم : انما تاتي عليكم : حيث (٣) اثم وخطايا
التي يصير في قريتكُم : (٤) ابعدوا الشر من بينكم : حينئذ يبعد (٥) الله من بينكم هذه
الافات : وليس (٦) يجيب غضبه عليكم . اجابوا كلهم (٧) من فم واحد : وقالوا نقر
قدامك يا (٨) سيدنا : انا خطاة ولم نخبي خطايانا (٩) منك : والان نعلم قدسك ان
هذا (١٠) رئيس القرية نجاسات قبيحه (١١) شريره يصنع : وليس نستطيع (١٢) نقول
له شيء : ونحن نعلم من (١٣) نجاساته وفساده : تجي علينا (١٤) هذه الافات : والان
يا ابونا انتهرهُ : (١٥) وبكته^{١٤} لانه يسمع لك : فامر (١٦) القديس مار اسيا^١ : ان
ياتي الرجل [17A] (١) الى قدامه : فلما سمع ذلك الرجل (٢) خبر القديس مار اسيا^١ :
وقعت عليه (٣) الاخافه والفرع : وصار مثل الميت : (٤) ولما جاء قال لهُ القديس مار
(٥) اسيا^١ : ايها الرجل الاثيم الخاطيء : (٦) الممتلي من كل الشرور : ليس (٧) تعلم
ان هؤلاء الشرور الذي تفعل (٨) تحت داعيات بيتك : وتظن ان احد (٩) ليس يراك :
وقدام الله لم (١٠) يستطيع شيء يخفى : اما تخاف (١١) من حكم المهورب : وديان
العدل : (١٢) المسلط على الجنه وعلى (١٣) جهنم : ويجازى لكل انسان (١٤)
حسب افعاله : والان اقول لك : (١٥) ان لم ترجع من شرك : وتقدم توبه (١٦) عله
على وجه خطاياك : وتقيم [17B] (١) وعد الله قدام هذا الجمع كله : (٢) انك لا تعود
تصنع شيء قبيح قدام (٣) الله : والان اعلم انك انت قائم وتقبل (٤) مجازاتك موت

شنيع : فخاف الرجل : (٥) وارتعد جداً : والقا نفسه قدام (٦) رجلي القديس مار اسيا⁺ : وهو يبكي (٧) بكاءً مرّاً : ويتضرع اليه : ويطلب له (٨) من الله حتى يغفر له سيئاته : (٩) التي فعل : ومن ذلك الوقت : من (١٠) قدام ذلك الرجل قرب توبة صار هو (١١) وصار مؤمناً كامل : وصلى عليه القديس (١٢) مار اسيا⁺ : وعلى تلك القرية : ولا (١٣) عاد عليها ايضاً تلك الغضب : وكل (١٤) من رأى وسمع : شكر ومجد الله : (١٥) وشاع خبره في ساير البلدان : (١٦) وكانوا الناس يشتهون ان ينظروه : [18A](١) وان يشفون منه جميع الذين هم (٢) بالامراض الصعبة :

مار آسيا يصل إلى أوفيميا

ولما خرج من (٣) هناك جاء الى مدينة اوفيميا : التي (٤) هي حمص : وفرحوا به اصحابها فرحاً (٥) عظيم : وايضاً اسقفهم طلب منه ان (٦) يمكث عندهم زمان ولم يختار : لانه (٧) كان يحسب عزة بني البشر واوقارهم (٨) مثل الشتيمة : وطلبوا منه ان (٩) يصير عندهم زمان : ولم يصير ولم (١٠) يختار : وطلبوا منه ان يصلى عليهم : (١١) وعلى مدينتهم : وبين ما هو عابر : (١٢) التمح فابصر بيت اصنام : قال ما (١٣) هو هذا البيت : حتى هو مزين في (١٤) بنيانه : اجابوا وقالوا له يا سيدي (١٥) انه بيت الاله : لهولايك الذي (١٦) يسجدون الشياطين : وفيه مائة [18B](١) وسبعين كاهن الذين يخدمون فيه : (٢) حينئذ قام القديس مار اسيا⁺ في (٣) ذلك الموضع : وبرك على الارض وصلى (٤) قدام الله : وعينيه تجرى دموعاً (٥) منه : واخذ تراب على يديه : وجعل (٦) عليه رسم الصليب المعظم : وقال (٧) ايها الرب الاله تحن الى بني (٨) البشر الاشقياء : لان الشياطين سبوهم (٩) حتى يسجدون لهم : كمثل ما (١٠) يسجدون لاسمك المقدس : فارسل (١١) نار مع هذا التراب التي صار عليه (١٢) رسم الصليب المعظم : واهلك هذا (١٣) البيت النجس المزدول : مسكن (١٤)

الشياطين : ولا يعود ايضاً يكون لهم (١٥) ذكر الى الابد : والقي التراب على (١٦) ذلك البيت : والتهمت فيه نار [19A] (١) السادوميه : وصعد دخان ذاك النار (٢) الصعبه : حتى غطى ذلك البلد : (٣) ومان كان يستطيع ايضاً ان يحتمل (٤) رائحته النتنة : التي كان يخرج منها : (٥) ووقعت الاخافه والفرزه على جميع (٦) الناس : الذين ابصروا وسمعوا هذا (٧) العجب العظيم : وكانوا الاحبار (٨) يلتهبون بغضب عظيم : حتى يهلكون (٩) القديس مار اسيا⁺ : ولما ارادوا اهل (١٠) المدينه ان يسحبون السيوف ويقيمون (١١) الحرب : فما تركهم القديس : بل (١٢) ابتعد من بين ايديهم : ورتبهم وهداهم (١٣) بكلام كثير : ان يرجعون من طغيانهم : (١٤) الى معرفة الحق : وهم ما اختاروا : (١٥) ولما ابصر ليس فيهم موضع الدوا (١٦) ولا الشفا : اخذ ما بيده ويزق عليهم [19B] (١) وصاروا عميان لم يبصرون شيء : وجعلوا (٢) ليكون قدامه ويسالونه ان يعطيهم (٣) ضياء لعينيهم : ويغفر لهم جهلهم : (٤) قال لهم القديس مار اسيا⁺ : ان لم (٥) تعتمدون ليس تنفتح عيونكم : (٦) وطلبوا منه ان يعطيهم رسم المعموديه : (٧) هم واولادهم ونسائهم واهلهم : (٨) وكانوا جميعهم الف وخمسا مائة (٩) نفس : واعتمدوا واخذوا دم السيد (١٠) يسوع المسيح مخلصنا : وجعلهم (١١) مسيحيين : وسلمهم الى اسقف (١٢) المدينه :

مار آسيا في جنداريس

وخرج من عندهم : وجعل (١٣) في ضميرهم : ان يمضى الى انطاكيه : (١٤) وجاء الى قرية واحده تدعى جنداريس : (١٥) وقبلوه اهل القرية بفرح (١٦) عظيم : ف جاء اليه رجل ووجهه [20A] (١) مخبل من الشرير : فאלقا نفسه قدام (٢) القديس : وطلب منه ان يشفيه : فاخذ (٣) القديس حنان وماء : وصلا عليهم وطللى (٤) بهم عينيه : فحسن به بصره : وصار (٥) كمثل لم يصيبه شيء : ومضى هو يمجّد (٦) الله

الذي افتقدهُ برحمتهُ : ومضى (٧) ابرا مرضى كثيرون من اوجاعهم : وبارك (٨) الى مرضى : وخرج من عندهم ومضى : (٩) وفيما هو عابر على جانب قرية : (١٠) واحده فوجد شاب جالس بين (١١) القبور : وهم ساكن هناك دائماً : فلما (١٢) رأى القديس مار اسيا⁺ : قام الى (١٣) لقاءه وهو يزعم ويقول : الويل لي (١٤) منك ايها الحكيم الرومى : يا عدواً (١٥) جنسنا الى متى تضطهدنا : وكان (١٦) ذلك الانسان ينهش لحمه باسنانه : [20B] (١) فلما نظره القديس مار لسيل⁺ : انه (٢) في شدة عظيمة : واناس كثيره : (٣) يكون عليه : قال لذلك الشيطان (٤) النجس عدواً لجنس البشر : انا اقول (٥) لك باسم سيدي يسوع المسيح : (٦) اخرج من هذا الانسان : ولا تعود تدنوا (٧) الى جبلة الله : وفي حال الوقت (٨) خرج الشيطان وهو يصيح باصواتاً (٩) سمحه مما ليس سمع احد مثلها : (١٠) والذين ابصروا هذه المعجزة : مجدوا (١١) الله الذي برحمته افتقد خليقته : (١٢) وايضاً مرّه كان ماض في طريق :

مار آسيا والأمير الفارسي

وكان (١٣) واحد من جند الملك اسمه بالدار : (١٤) وكان قد أرسل الى ماك الروم لكيما : (١٥) يجعل الصلح بينهم : فضربه روح (١٦) روح النجس له ولفرسه وصار مثل [21A] (١) ميت : فلما قدموه اليه : اخذ الحنان (٢) ومزجه في الماء : ودهن به جسده : (٣) فبرئ في وقته وقام كمثّل لم تاذا : (٤) ومضى في حال سبيله : وهو فرحان (٥) يمجّد الله : ويشكر قديسه مار (٦) اسيا⁺ : ولما وصل الى بلاده : اخبر (٧) للملك الفرس ابناً اسمه هورميراد : (٨) وكان هذا قد فسد جسده من الحرب : (٩) الذي كان يصير بينهم وبين الروم : وكان (١٠) قد انشق مراق جوفه في الحرب : (١١) ولما سمع الملك من بالدار : خير (١٢) القديس مار اسيا⁺ : وعجائبه (١٣) وإياته الظاهره : وجميع ما يفعل : (١٤) فحمل ابنه على السرير : وارسله (١٥) مع عبده الى

عند القديس مار (١٦) اسيا⁺ : مع جزاء كثير : وخافت كل بلاد [21B] (١) الروم من قدامهم : ولما وصلوا الى (٢) عند القديس مار اسيا⁺ : فرعوا اهل (٣) انطاكية منهم وتسلمت فرسانهم : (٤) وخرجوا اليهم : فلما سمع القديس (٥) مار اسيا⁺ : منعهم القديس عن ذلك (٦) ووقف بينهم : وقدموا الفتى ابن (٧) الملك هورميزاد : الى قدام القديس (٨) مار اسيا⁺ : فاخذ الماء والحنان وصلى عليهم : (٩) واعطاهم حتى يدهنوه به : واخذوا (١٠) ودهنوا سائر جسده فشفى وصار كما (١١) كان قديم : واخرجوا واعطوه مواهب (١٢) كثيرة : مما كان قد ارسل معهم ملك (١٣) الفرس : فاما هو لم ياخذ شيء منهم (١٤) ابداً غير تفاحة ذهب وكاس وصينيته : (١٥) وارسلهم الى القدس حتى يكونوا : (١٦) لفاتور الحيات : ورجعوا من عنده [22A] (١) بفرساً عظيماً ✱ وهم يمجّدون الله (٢) علي جميع ما اروا :

عجائب أخرى لمار آسيا

وايضاً كان يدور (٣) القديس مار اسيا⁺ : في نواحي (٤) انطاكية : وجاز في قرية واحدة (٥) ووجد امرأة قد شربت خمراً كثيراً (٦) ونامت : فجاءت حية صغيرة ودخلت (٧) في فمها : وكبرت في بطنها : وصارت (٨) كبيرة جداً : وكانت تتعذب منها (٩) عذاباً شديداً : فجاءت ووقعت على رجلين (١٠) القديس مار اسيا⁺ : وهي تبكي : (١١) فاخذ القديس مار اسيا⁺ الحنان والماء : (١٢) وبارك عايبهم واعطاها فشربت : وفي (١٣) حين الوقت نزلة الحية : وهي باقية (١٤) من بطنها : وكل من نظر وسمع مجد الله : (١٥) على هذه الأعجوبة : وايضاً كان في (١٦) بلد اخر معروف في بلد التجار : وكان [22B] (١) فيه حيوان شرير : وكان قد عمل (٢) فساداً عظيماً في الناس : حتى ان (٣) من الصبح الى تسع ساعات لم يكون (٤) احد يقدر يخرج من مكانه : ولما سمعوا (٥) خبر القديس مار اسيا⁺ : اجتمعوا كل (٦) اهل البلد وجاءوا

اليه : وهم حزينين (٧) باكيين : وقالوا له على التنين الشرير (٨) وعلى فسادهُ : فاخذ القديس مار (٩) اسيا⁺ الحنان والماء : وبارك عليهم (١٠) واطاهم : وقال امضوا ابصروا من (١١) اين يكون يجوز اليكم : بزّوا هذا الماء (١٢) صلياً : واجتمعوا كلكم في تلك (١٣) الليلة : واجعلوها سهراً وطلبةً : (١٤) قدام الله : ولي رجاء من الله : ان لا (١٥) يعود وياديكم : حينئذ مضى كل الشعب : (١٦) وفعلوا كما قال لهم القديس مار [23A] (١) اسيا⁺ : ولما كان الصبح : وجدوا اثنين (٢) ملقى وهو مشقوق من راسه الى (٣) ذنبه : ومجدوا الله جميع الحاضرين (٤) على هذه الأعجوبة : وايضاً اتت (٥) اليه امرأة واحدة من ذلك البلد : (٦) وفيها فضلة من الماء : والقت نفسها (٧) قدام رجلي القديس مار اسيا⁺ : (٨) وهي تبكي بكاءً مرّاً : فشقق عليها (٩) القديس مار اسيا⁺ : واخذ حنان وماء (١٠) وصلى عليهم : واعطاها فشربت وشفيت (١١) من شدتها : ومجّدت الله الذي (١٢) اعطاها الشفاء : وبعد ذلك جعل (١٣) القديس مار اسيا⁺ في قلبه ان (١٤) يمضي الى بلد اقلوديا : لانه كان (١٥) خراب في ذلك الزمان : وكان قد (١٦) سكنوه رهبان كثير متوحدين : [23B] (١) وجعل يكون تردده في ذلك البلد : (٢) حيث كان حوله جبال شامخه : (٣) عسره جداً : ولما دخل الى بلد (٤) اقلوديا : فرحوا به الرهبان المتوحدين (٥) الساكنين فيه : وكان فيه (٦) اديره^{١٥} ايضاً ومكانات عظام : وكان (٧) القديس مار اسيا⁺ : يدور في المكانات (٨) والديره : ويزور جميع المتوحدين : (٩) الذين فيهم : وفرح القديس حيث (١٠) راه لانه كان مشتاق يتفرّج في (١١) تلك الديره : ويعلمهم حسن السيره : (١٢) لهم كثير ويعلمهم حسن السيره : (١٣) ويقول ان لا يضلّ احداً في تدبيره : (١٤) ولا يجيز الى راي الاراطقه^{١٦} الخطاة : (١٥) وكان القديس مار اسيا⁺ في اعمال (١٦) عظيمه : وتقشفاً وتديراً

الديره ؟ 15)
الاراتق = 16)

صعب [24A] (١) قاسيا : وكان يعلمهم في ذاته : من (٢) بعدما سكن في ذلك البلد زمان (٣) كثير.

آخر أيام مار آسيا

ارسل الملك تاودوسيوس (٤) الكبير : رسائل في وراء القديس مار (٥) اسيا+ : ان يمضى اليه : من اجل (٦) ابنته لانها كانت تتعذب من (٧) الشيطان : وايضاً كان يريد ان يصصره : (٨) ويتبارك منه : فلم يقدر ان يخالف (٩) القديس مار اسيا+ امر الملك : (١٠) فاعطا السلام الى الاخوة الرهبان (١١) كلهم : وقال لهم ابقوا بالسلام (١٢) يا اخوتي : وصلّوا علي : لان رسائل (١٣) الملوك لم ترتد : وانا مستعجل (١٤) جداً : سلام سيدنا يكون معكم (١٥) دائماً آمين ❀ وسار مع جند الملك : (١٦) عاجلاً : ولما جعلوا ان يمضون في [24B] (١) الطريق : اجاب القديس مار اسيا+ (٢) رجل العجب : وقال الرسل انتم (٣) تعلمون يا اولادي : اني انا لم أقدر (٤) اسير معكم عاجلاً : بل انتم امضوا (٥) وانا اجيء وحدي كمثّل قوّتي : (٦) وانما قال هذا القديس الحله (٧) حتى لا يكون لهم خطاب ويتعطل (٨) من خدمة الله : وايضاً ان لا يكون (٩) له معهم عزّة ووقار : وكان قد (١٠) حظرهم ان لا يجهرن امره لاحد : (١١) فاما الجند لم يتركوه : لكن اخذوه (١٢) معهم وساروا في الطريق : ولما (١٣) وصلوا الى روميه : وقرّبوا المدينة : (١٤) التي تدعى نيقوموديا : عرفوه : (١٥) اهل تلك المدينة : وفرحوا به (١٦) فرحاً عظيماً : وقدموا اليه امراض [25A] (١) كثيره من كل روع : مجانين ومضروبين ومصابين : (٢) من الشيطان : شفا جميعهم وابراهيم : وطلبوا (٣) منه المؤمنين والكهنة واكابرهم : ورؤساء (٤) المدينة : ان يبقى عندهم اياماً قليلة : (٥) ولم يختار : لان مرسوم الملك عاجلاً كان : (٦) وحينئذ خرجوا جميع الشعب : واستودعوه (٧) بعزة ووقار : ولما وصلوا الى شاطئ (٨) البحر : انكشف القديس مار

اسيا⁺ : من (٩) الله على يد الملاك : على خروجه من العالم : (١٠) وقال له الملاك
جوز الى عند الملك وارجع (١١) الى ديرك الذي بنيت في انطاكيه : لان قد دعا (١٢)
وقت خروجك من هذا العالم : حتى تنتقل (١٣) الى حياة الابدية : حينئذ قام القديس :
(١٤) ورجع الى ديرهُ : وبقا في الدير تسعة ايام : (١٥) وبعد ذلك مرض وبقي ثلاثة
ايام : وانتقل (١٦) من هذه الدنيا الفانية الى راحة الملكوتيه (١٧) نسال الرب ان يدعينا
لمكانهِ : ويعيننا الرب (١٨) على خلاص نفوسنا امين

THE LEGEND OF MAR ASIA TRANSLATION

[4B] (Arabic writing with date of May 15, 1960) “The plump(?) Father, Daoud Salim, the vice Bishop El Mina Tripoli, and the person responsible of the church Saint Efreem for the Syrian Orthodox in Lebanon”.

the vice Bishop
Signature

DEDICATION

(Karshuni text begins)

**In the name of the Father and the Son
and the Holy Ghost, One God
Amen**

(1) We begin, with the help of the sublime God (2) and the perfection of his reconciliation. And we write (3) a story of the pure (and) precious (4) Holy One, Saint Asia, (5) the Roman¹⁷ sage. May his prayers (6) and his blessings watch over¹⁸ all of us. Amen. (7) We shall send up glory to the author of glory, who (8) created this world by his grace, and (9) decorated it with all beautiful perfection (which had been) (10) created. And he caused man to tarry (11) and dwell in this world. And after **[5A]** (1) his expulsion from the luxurious paradise, the world (2) became a place and a dwelling for temporary living. (3) It no longer remained great; this world became (4) aged to us. But when we ended up to the west (5) of our former country, we encountered there (6) a world of hardship and weariness on account of (7) the sin which gained control of us by (our) transgressing (8) the commandment. Because of this, each one (9) of the ancient pious ones began to be prepared (10) through chastity and purity in this (11) temporary life and transient age, (12) and they were perfected through works of virtue (13) (to be) a heritage and children of that spiritual world: (14) the former habitation, which will not (15) change. And today they stay in (16) the kingdom (of heaven), and they live in comfort in its bounty, **[5B]**(1) which does not cease, and will never be (2) destroyed. Amen.

17) i.e. Byzantine

18) It would make more sense if the word were *نحرس*, and perhaps that was what the writer intended. So I am making that assumption in the translation.

MAR ASIA'S MIRACULOUS BIRTH

My brothers, I wish to tell (3) you a story of the precious saint, Mar (4) Asia the Wise, a great and wonderful man, (5) and how his life was directed by God, (6) and how the Lord chose him forth from his mother's womb, (7) and this saint was from a mighty race (8) and a large tribe. And he was from the great (9) city of Paria¹⁹. And his father was (10) a man who feared God; known and of high position (11) in the presence of the king, the believer Theodosius (12) the Great²⁰, highly trustworthy, (13) a Godfearer. And the name of his mother was Jurjunia, (14) and they were both pious before God. (15) And their comportment was reverent; and they (16) had no children, because they were barren. **[6A]** (1) And they were in great distress and grief for (2) there was no one to be their heir, because they (3) possessed very great wealth. And every day (4) they brought (their) submission and the request (5) along with the offerings and votive gifts to God. And requested (6) that he would give them (even) one progeny, so that (7) they would be able to rejoice in it in this world. And that there would (8) be an heir after them. And in due time (9) the idea came to them that they should go and pray (10) in the temple of Saint John the Baptist. (11) And they arose and hastened, and (took) with them votive gifts (12) and offerings, according to their customary quantity. And when (13) they arrived at the temple of the holy (14) Saint John the Baptist, they went inside after (15) the priests who were serving in (16) that exalted place. And there was a man who was **[6B]**(1) prosperous, and he received them with joy and gladness and gave them rest (2) from their weariness and the hardship of the road. (3) And after they had rested, the pious ones arose (4) and ran to the temple of St. John. (5) And they raised their hands toward heaven, and prayed (6) before God with a pure heart, and with bitter (7) tears. And they presented the pure request to God. (8) And they humbled themselves and said, "Oh Lord, (9) The Righteous, The Compassionate, hear the voice of your sinful (10) servants and grant our request (11) from your storehouses full of riches and mercy, (12) and give your servants posterity (lit. "fruit"), so that (13) your divine nature might be refreshed therein. For you (14) are compassionate and full of pity, and from you (15) emanate all good things". (16) And they brought out the golden

19) PAYNE-SMITH, *Thesaurus*, (col. 3027) says this was a city in the province of the Euphrates.

20) He was the Roman emperor from 378-395 AD and during his reign Christianity became the state religion of Rome.

clothes which they [7A](1) had brought with them as votive offerings, and (2) they gave (them) to that priest and asked him to (3) stand with them in prayer before God (4) three days and three nights in that (5) holy temple (when) they presented (their) submission (6) and their request to the most high God. And after (7) three days they wished to return to (8) their city. That priest answered them (9) and said to them, "My brother and sister, go in the peace (10) of the Lord, (for) you came because of your hope in him. He (11) will give you according to your faith. And I know (12) that here you will have the fruit (i.e. "posterity") of joy (13) and happiness". And he prayed for the fruit of the faithful for them. (14) And they proceeded to their city joyfully. And their house (15) was a rest (for them from) their exile and the (foreign) dwelling places, (16) because they were very reverent toward the most high God. [7B](1) And the were strong in the faith, and did not deviate (2) from the law. And they were similar to Abraham, (3) the Patriarch, who was a (in) a port and a place (4) of exile, they were experiencing²¹ the spirits. And after (5) a year had been completed the pregnancy was finished and they had (6) a child.

ABBA MARCUS NAMES MAR ASIA

And (those) pious (people) wanted to (7) take their child and go up to (8) the holy temple of St. John the Baptist (9) in order to give him the ceremony of baptism (10) and the anointment of the sacred chrism. And there was a certain (11) hermit on Mount Sinai. And he was distinguished (12) by godly deeds, and he was qualified (13) to a high degree. And his name was (14) Abba²² Marcus. It had been told to him by God (15) to make his way to the child and to give him (16) his name. And then he arrived at his dwelling. [8A](1) And while the holy Abba Marcus (2) was considering what name to give him, God (3) spoke to him in a sublime voice (saying): "Asia²³, (4) i.e. the Wise, is what the child shall be called, because he is chosen (5) by me, and I am willing to put in his hands wonders (6) and miracles and many healings, and his name (7) will appear in all the earth. See (that) you do not (8) delay!" Then the holy Abba Marcus (9) arose and hurried and found (10) the boy sitting on a bed. And turned (11) to him and greeted him. And that entire (12) house was filled with light. And he said to the parents (13) of the

21) I am assuming the verb in question is from the root *dhuq*.

22) Abba (written "anba" in Arabic) is a high ecclesiastical title in the Coptic church.

23) This is the Syriac word for "physician".

boy, that this child - know (that) his name (14) is The Wise, because God makes known that he will perform with (15) his (own) hands miracles and wonders and great healings. (16) Behold, I have come and informed you! **[8B]**(1) And he returned to his place where he was living. (2) And as for his (i.e. the child's) parents, they took (3) the boy and went up to the temple of the Holy One, (4) St. John the Baptist. And with them were votive offerings (5) and many (other) offerings. And they performed (lit. "gave") there (6) the baptism, and the anointing of the sacred chrism. (7) And the boy grew up in the power of God. (8) And his parents taught him writing and the Psalms. (9) And Saint Asia was intelligent and of (great) understanding (10) from God who had chosen him; greater than (11) his associates, so that whoever observed him marveled (12) at his knowledge.

MAR ASIA REJECTS MARRIAGE

And after (13) the boy had grown and reached (the age of) fifteen (14) years, his parents wished to have him marry (15) according to the (specified) year of the holy church. (16) They made their way to people (who were) senior leaders. **[9A]** (1) And they gave him a girl of the province²⁴, viz. (that which is) near (2) the city which is great and exalted before (3) the kings. And the girl was very lovely (4) to behold, and her name was Arwinia. (5) And when they wanted to perform the legal marriage (6) for him, at that time the Holy Ghost, (7) which had chosen him from his mother's womb, (8) stirred the saint like the fire (9) which had been kindled, and he recalled (it) within himself, and said, (10) "If a thing persists, it is not bad"²⁵. (11) Therefore he arose in his strength and turned his back on (lit. "disdained") this (12) world and all its lusts, and was passionate about (13) the love of God and followed his commandments: and (14) he took comfort in the Psalms of David the prophet every (15) day and all the time, and he delighted in them: (16) he was delighted and comforted (as though) by the delicacies of kings in **[9B]**(1) his mouth. And he always was saying: "Oh (2) God, I have hoped in you. Save me, and deliver me (3) from all the torment of my religion!"²⁶ And blessedness to whoever (4) fears God and keeps his ordinances. (5) And to you, O Lord, I have offered up myself. O my God, (6) to you I have humbled myself. I am not ashamed". And it was (7) these and similar things which he

24) This is a loan word, viz. Greek *παρχία*.

25) I am assuming that the word in question is from the Syriac *bisha* "bad", but it could also be an orthographic variant of Arabic *bashia* "ugly, hateful".

26) One could also read that word as *daini*, i.e. "my indebtedness".

recited, and he was (8) continuing in a transient world. And with him were (9) all who considered the world (to be) similar (10) to sleep, and to grass of the field, which (11) withers and dies. Then he arose rapidly (12) and hastily like a sluggard who (13) awakens from sleep in a mighty hurry, (14) (and) he went out of his father's house, and faced (15) the road which he wanted (to travel), even (16) to follow the servant of the Great One, for whom the desert was the key to the destruction of the city.

MAR ASIA BEGINS HIS JOURNEY

[10A] (1) And he was dressed in the most magnificent clothes and bracelets (2) which not (even) the kings possessed. And girded with a belt of gold (3) around his middle. And he (4) was provisioned with (precious) stones and costly jewels. (5) And when he had separated himself from the city by (a few) miles, then (6) he kneeled down and prayed saying: "Oh (7) Lord, the God who created the heavens (8) and the earth and everything dwelling there, there is no (9) at all besides you. You, Oh Lord, guide me (10) and lead me on the road that gives life. And be (11) a kindly companion to me on this trying (12) path, which I have set out to follow, (13) with hope in you. And since I left my biological (14) parents, may you be (lit. "complete") these things for me: (15) my father, my clan and my tribe. I have transferred myself (16) into your holy people. 'If indeed a person leaves [10B](1) his father and mother, and his fatherhood and his children (2) and his wife, and repents within himself, and lifts up (3) his cross upon his shoulder and follows me, behold, (4) is he not a disciple to me?' And now, my Lord (5) and my God, according to your faithful word (6) which you rendered in the gospel, behold, I (7) went out after you, and your holy word (8) will guide me and lead me in your way without (9) stumbling or mistake(s), until I glorify (10) your name forever and ever. (11) And after the saint finished his prayer, (12) he set out for the seaside, to the place (13) where the boats stay. And he called to the (14) ship's master, and said to him, "Mister, (15) I want you to take me across this sea". (16) And the ship's master (?) looked at him, and amazement of him [11A](1) seized him, and he was afraid to look at him, (2) because he evinced a likeness of the children of kings, and (had) the gold (3) belt in his midsection. And he said (4) to himself, is this Sabian the son of Kings? (5) And he approached (him) and bowed down to him and said to him, "Oh master, (6) I would like you to tell me where you are from (7) and whose son you are, and you have nothing to fear from me, (8) because your clothes and your form resemble the chil-

dren (9) of kings. Are you a king, or from the royal (10) class?" Then the holy (11) Mar Asia answered him and said, "I will not tell (12) you (what) I am doing, and as for your questions concerning who I am (13) and where I am from, it is not necessary for you to inquire". Then (14) the owner of the boat said to him, "Know, oh (15) my brother, that I am a poor man, and much gold (16) is the rental price of the ship, and how **[11B]**(1) I work! And you want to cross alone, and not let me benefit from the rental price of (2) the ship! And now look, tell me what (3) you want me to do". (4) The saint, Mar Asia answered him and said to him, (5) Mister, do not fear. I will not wrong you. Behold (6) these clothes of mine are worth more than (7) three times the (rental) price (of the boat). And (8) I have an urgent request of my lord, that if you will come back, there will be (9) additional profit for you (which he had wanted). (10) Then he took off his clothes and gave them to (11) the boatman. And after that he gathered up the (12) special clothes and put them on. And he approved and sat down (13) in the boat, and set out on the sea toward (14) Jerusalem. And when he reached the port (15) he took care of the cargo which he wanted. However, there were not many (16) vessels, (so) merchants came to that **[12A]**(1) man, the boatman, and gave him the fare (2) and put all their load in (3) the boat. And when they wished to travel (4) on the sea, Mar Asia called to (5) the boatman and revealed to him everything (6) which had been, saying to him, and forbidding him to (7) tell anyone lest they come: "And that which they will ask (8) about, I will not declare to them my business tonight (and) they will be assured (9) by you (concerning) that which I gave you. And they will try to obtain me from you, (10) and from your hands. See, sir, how (11) I have prepared you. And I am innocent concerning you, because I (12) informed you of everything". Then he left (13) and went and made his way to the temple (sanctuary?) and after (14) that his parents came with many horsemen, (15) and sought him and found him. And when they (16) did not find him, they called to that boatman **[12B]**(1) and asked him: "Have you seen here a young man dressed (2) in expensive clothes? And if so, reveal his eminence (i.e. whereabouts) (3) to us (and) we will give you, brother, whatever you demand. (4) Just don't conceal (it) from us". And as for the boatman, (5) he used the word(s) of the holy Saint (6) Asia. He answered and said to them: "Sirs, (7) I do not know anything about what you are saying to me (8) about him". And with much swearing (lit. "many oaths") they left him (9) and returned (home). And they were sad and tearful, and as for (10) the mother of the saint, Mar Asia, when (11) she heard that which had befallen her son, (12) she began to weep and wail for a long time (13) over the separation from her son.

MAR ASIA REACHES JERUSALEM

And as for the saint, (14) Mar Asia, after a while he entered into (15) Jerusalem, reaching the place where the (16) the Christian gentleman would tarry: in [13A](1) the place of the crucifixion, and at the grave of the Holy One (2) where he had been placed. And then he was received (3) there five months, and the saint (4) tarried and wandered to the place where the cloud descended (5) upon Mt. Sinai; and he was continually wandering (6) and the tears were streaming from his eyes (7) like the watery eye which runs, (8) like Moses, the great (man) of God, who was (9) weeping over the breakdown of the people. Thus (10) was the saint, Mar Asia, imploring (11) God to remove the afflictions of (his) wrath (12) from the world - the glory which he had chosen (13) by his mercy and selected holy (14) people for himself, in order to satisfy his holiness, (15) for this in times of hardships and extreme afflictions. (16) The people will return to their glory. [13B](1) And now (it) they have become the walls of the world because of the power (2) of the deity(?)²⁷ living in them.

MAR ASIA AND MAR DOMITIUS

And after (3) Mar Asia had been in this (4) mountain for ten years, God wished to (5) move the holy Mar Domitius²⁸ from this (6) transient world to the permanent world, (7) so that he might relax in the joy (8) and happiness reserved for him. And Mar (9) Domitius called to Mar Asia and said to him: (10) "My son, the day has come in which I want to leave (11) this world, and our master has sent (12) you here to bury my feeble (13) body. And now, come close and give me (14) the greeting and I will remain in peace. And pray (15) over me - I am feeble". Mar Asia answered (16) and said to him: "My brother, I will bury your venerable [14A](1) body, because we have here neither adze (2) nor shovel. And nothing is present at all (3) with which I might dig". The master answered and said to him: (4) "Do not worry about this matter. Christ (5) the Lord will prepare for you whatever is necessary". Then (6) he gave up his spirit to God. And as for the lions which (7) had been serving Mar Domitius, God commanded them, (8) and they came and

²⁷ The translation "deity" assumes that the Arabic word in question is supposed to be الوهية.

²⁸ There is a St. Domitius living in 437 who was first a king and later a saint, but his dates do not fit our current text. There was apparently a second St. Domitius who was simply one of the saints in the "holy mountain" but I cannot find any dates for him.

entered into the cave like (9) people in mourning over the departure of Mar Domitius, (10) as God had granted (them), and he acknowledged him among the animals, (11) and the birds among themselves, (and) they even approached (him), even (like) (12) people bringing their children. And then (13) they separated from each other. Thus (14) these lions (who had) come together were also weeping, (15) and with their hands and their feet were digging a spot (16) like a cavern. So that the body of the saint would be (buried). [14B](1) And as for the Blessed Mar Asia, he was amazed (2) at them. And he prayed over him three days and three (3) nights. Then he placed him in the cavern which (4) the lions had made. And after he had completed (5) everything and equipped him (for burial), he closed the entrance of the cave, (6) and set off for his destination. And he was sad. And the lions (7) made ready and came after him, as they had been following (8) Mar Domitius. And as for the holy (9) Mar Asia, his work was increasing every day, (10) and demons were coming to him in hideous (11) forms, striking him frightfully and (then) fleeing (12) in fear. And he was rebuking them by the power of God. (13) And he was driving them from his presence like smoke. (14) And all types were coming at him. (15) And they were wailing like jackals, and ugly (16) sounds were destroying him. And they were bombarding him with lights [15A](1) and rays in order to frighten (2) the pious one. And the saint was laughing at them. (3) How weak and contemptible they were! And while he was (4) rebuking them and driving them away like weeds (5) which are scattered before the raging wind. (6) Thus they were scattered in the air by (7) the word of the sacred power. (8) And their voices were coming (and saying) oh (9) Hakim el-Rumani – from whence did the Nazarene (10) send you to us? And as for the holy Mar (11) Asia, that Christ²⁹ was speaking to them (12) by the power of God and His wisdom, which drowned (13) “Alghun” in the sea (and) he lured them into (14) the outer darkness, which is appointed (15) for evil doers. And thus they perished and were (16) not seen (again). And the saint, Mar Asia, stayed [15B](1) in that mountain, after the demise (2) of Mar Domitius, fifteen (3) years. And the Lord delivered him from the attacks (4) of Satan, and he remained in tranquility and mighty (5) prayer.

And after he had been there a long (6) time, and he was in a mighty struggle every (7) day over his labors, he was in great torment - (8) crucified night and day before God. (9) And tears came from his eyes like (from) (10) the gutters which flow. And he approached (11) God and inquired on behalf of the sins of the world. (12) He did not eat anything except (some) fruit (13)

29) Or "Christian" since this word is obviously an epithet of Mar Asia.

remedies which were in the mountains; (14) to the point that his body withered and dried up from (15) his worshipping and abstaining from food. (16) Then God wanted to reveal his commandment **[16A]** (1) to the world. Likewise was the prophecy fulfilled (2) about him, that the city could not be hidden (3) which has been built on top of a mountain, (4) as Christ, the Master had said. And when (5) he returned from the wilderness, he went into the world. (6) And he came to the town of Tadasandiq (?), the report (7) of him spread throughout the regions of Mount Sinai - to whoever (8) was inhabiting it. And when he entered into (9) the town, all the people gathered together (10) around him, and they were sorrowful (and) weeping. And they said (11) to him, "Oh Father, pray over our village, because (12) for many years the hail has been coming and ruining (13) the seed and destroying the fruit. And we are living (14) a life of destruction, because we have given up ginger, (15) and the first fruits (?) and the (fruit of) the oil press". The holy (16) Mar Asia answered and said to them, "These **[16B]** (1) misfortunes and afflictions which have taken place (2) in your village, to be sure, (what is) coming upon you, (is) the serpent (3) of offense and sins, which is staying in your village. (4) Remove the evil from your midst. Then God (5) will remove these misfortunes from your midst. And he (6) will not answer his wrath upon you". They all answered (7) with one voice (lit. "one mouth") and said, "We will acknowledge before you, Oh (8) our master, the sins; and we did not conceal our sins (9) from you. And now we know, your holiness, that this (10) mayor of the town is doing repugnant, (11) evil deeds. And we are not able (12) to say anything to him. And we know (that) because of (13) his evil deeds and depravity these misfortunes (14) will come upon us. And now, Father, rebuke him (15) and censure him so that he will listen to you". And the holy (16) Mar Asia commanded the man to come **[17A]** (1) to the saint. And when that man heard (2) the news of the holy Mar Asia, dread fell (3) upon him and he was afraid. And he became like a dead man. (4) And when he came, the holy Mar Asia (5) said to him, "Oh wicked, sinful man, (6) full of all (manner of) wickedness! Do you (7) not know that these wicked things which you do (8) under your house (i.e. "in secret") And do you think that no (9) one sees you? And have you had no (10) fear before God? Do you not fear (11) the terrible wise one, and the pious one of justice, (12) the one who rules over paradise and over (13) hell? He allows to each person (14) the measure of his actions. And now I say to you, (15) that unless you repent of your evil and present lofty (16) penitence in the face of your sins, and arise **[17B]** (1) and promise God before all this crowd (2) that you will not again do anything evil before (3) God, (then) I know that you

(must) stand and accept (4) your penalty of a terrible death". And the man feared (5) and trembled greatly. And he cast himself down before (6) the feet of the holy Mar Asia. And he wept (7) bitterly. And he humbled himself before him and asked him (8) from God to forgive his offenses (9) which he had committed. And from that time on (10) that man was penitent (11) and became completely faithful. And the holy Mar (12) Asia prayed for him, and for that town, and (13) that vexation did not return to it. And all (14) who saw and heard (it) praised and glorified God. (15) His report spread throughout the regions of the countries, (16) and people yearned to look at him [18A] (1) and to be cured by him, all those who (2) were (suffering from) difficult diseases.

MAR ASIA ARRIVES IN APAMEA

And when he returned from (3) there he came to the city of Apamea³⁰, which (4) is Homs³¹. And her residents rejoiced over him with great (5) happiness. And even their bishop asked him to (6) stay with them for a while, but he did not choose to do so, because (7) he was considering the pride and privacy of the people, and did not want to impose on (8) them. And they asked him to (9) be with them a while, but he would not, and did not (10) choose to. And they asked him to pray for them, (11) and for their city. And meanwhile he crossed over. (12) He looked and noticed a house of idols. He said, "What (13) is this house?" It was even decorated in its (14) construction. They answered and said to him, "Oh master, (15) it is the house of the god - he to whom (16) the devils bow down. And inside are one hundred [18B](1) and seventy priests who worship there". (2) Then the holy Mar Asia arose in (3) that place, and (then) kneeled down upon the earth and prayed (4) to God. And his eyes were filled with tears, (5) and he took dust in his hand and made (6) upon it the sign of the glorious cross, and said, (7) "Oh Lord God! You are merciful toward wretched (8) humans. For the devils take them prisoner (9) so that they bow down to them as though (10) they were bowing down to your holy name. And send (11) fire with this dust upon which is (12) the sign of the glorious cross. And (as for) your people, (13) may the memory of this filthy, despicable house, (14) infested with devils not return (15) nor be (present) with them ever". And he cast the dust

30) There were several ancient cities named Apamea, but the one in Syria is on the Orontes River some 30-40 miles NW of Hama.

31) This Syrian city was known as Kadesh in the OT, then as Emesa during Roman times. After the Muslim conquest it was renamed Homs. Its identification with Apamea here is problematic, since it was far south of the Syrian Apamea.

upon (16) that house. And inside it blazed up the fire [19A] (1) of Sodom. And the smoke of that unquenchable fire (2) ascended until it covered that town. (3) And who could even stand the smell (4) of that stench, which was emanating from it? (5) And fear and dread fell upon all (6) the people who saw and heard this (7) mighty wonder. And the clergy were (8) inflamed with great anger - enough to destroy (9) the holy Mar Asia, while the people (10) of the city wanted to draw (their) swords and declare (11) war. Now the saint did not leave them, but rather (12) withdrew himself from their power and organized them and preached to them (13) with many words to return from their wickedness to a knowledge of the truth. But (14) they did not choose to. (15) And when he saw that there was no place in them for a remedy (16) or a cure, he took what was in his hand and spat upon them, [19B](1) and they became blind (and) did not see anything. And they began (2) weeping before him and asking him to give them (3) light for their eyes. And he forgave them for their foolishness, (4) The holy Mar Asia said to them, "You were not (5) baptized (so) your eyes were not opened". (6) And they implored him to give them the ordinance of baptism - (7) to them and their children and their women and relatives. (8) And they were altogether one thousand five hundred (9) souls³². And they were baptized and partook of the blood of (10) Jesus Christ, the Savior. And (thus) he made them (11) Christians. And he turned them over to the bishop (12) of the city.

MAR ASIA IN GANDARIS

And he departed from them, and fixed (13) in his³³ mind that he should make his way to Antioch. (14) And he came to a certain town known as Gandaris³⁴. (15) And the people received him with great (16) joy. And a man came to him and his face [20A] (1) was distorted by the Evil One. And he threw himself down before (2) the saint, and asked him to heal him. And the holy man (3) took balm³⁵ and water, and he prayed over them and immersed (4) his eyes in them. And his eyesight became normal, and it was (5) as though nothing had ever happened to him. And he went about praising (6)

32) NAU's text says it was 500 people he baptized (NAU, *Résumé*, p. 19).

33) The text says literally "their mind" but the context suggests that is a scribal error and it should read "his mind".

34) PAYNE-SMITH (*Thesaurus*, 749) mentions a town in Syria which in Syriac is either Gandarius or Gandaris.

35) This appears to be the word for "compassion," but the context suggests it is a physical substance which he mixed with the water. NAU cites the word in the Syriac text as Hnn' and translates it as *baume*, i.e. "balm".

God who had watched over him in his kindness. And he went about and (7) healed many sick people of their ailments. And he blessed (8) the ill, and (then) departed from their midst and set off. (9) And while he was passing beside a certain (10) town, he found a young man sitting among (11) the tombs. And he always stayed there. And when (12) he saw the holy Mar Asia, he beckoned him to (13) meet him, and he cried out and said, "Woe is me (14) because of you, oh wise Roman (or "Byzantine")! Oh enemy (15) of our race, how long will you oppress us?" And that (16) person was biting his flesh with his teeth. [20B](1) And when the holy Mar Asia saw that he was (2) in great distress, and (that) the people were weeping (3) copiously over him, he said to that unclean (4) demon, the enemy of the human race, "I command (5) you in the name of my master, Jesus Christ, (6) depart from this person, and do not return again (7) to the mountain of God. And immediately (8) the demon departed, and he was screaming in (such) (9) ugly sounds (that) he had never heard anything like it. (10) And those who witnesses this miracle praised (11) God who, in his kindness, watched over his creation.

MAR ASIA AND THE PERSIAN PRINCE

(12) And also, once, he was traveling on the road, and there was (13) one of the king's soldiers, and his name was Baldar³⁶. (14) And he had been sent to the Roman (or "Byzantine") King, Lakima, (15) to make peace between them. And a spirit smote him - (16) the spirit of the unclean one - him and his horse, and he was like [21A](1) a dead man. And when they brought him to him (i.e. to Mar Asia), he took the balm (2) and mixed it with water, and he anointed his (i.e. the patient's) body with it, (3) and he recovered immediately and arose as though he had not been harmed. (4) And immediately he went on his way, and he was happy (5) (and) he glorified God. And he thanked His Holiness, Mar (6) Asia. And when he arrived in his own country, he reported (7) to the Persian king, whose son's name was Hormizad. (8) And his body had been injured in a war (9) which had taken place between them and Byzantines. And (10) deserters had torn his belly in the war. (11) And when the king heard from Baldar the news (12) of the holy Mar Asia and his wonders (13) and visible miracles, and everything he was doing. (14) And he had his son carried on a bed and sent him (15) with his

36) This was a messenger of the Persian king who had been sent to conclude a peace treaty with the Byzantine king.

servant to the holy Mar (16) Asia with a great abundance. And the entire Byzantine lands [21B](1) were afraid of them. And when they arrived at (2) the place of the holy Mar Asia, the people of Antioch (3) were afraid of them and their knights armed themselves, (4) and went out to them. But when the holy Mar (5) Asia heard it, he hindered them from that, (6) and he stood among them. And they presented the boy, the son (7) of the king, Hormizad, to the holy (8) Mar Asia. And he took the water and the balm, and he prayed for them. (9) And he allowed them to anoint him with it. And they took (it) (10) and anointed the all his body, and he was healed and was as (11) before. And they brought out and gave (to him) many (12) gifts from those which the Persian king had sent (13) with them. However, he did not accept anything from them (14) at all, except for a golden apple. and a chalice, and a (large) plate. (15) And he sent them to Jerusalem to be (16) for the "table³⁷ of lives". And they returned from being with him [22A](1) to Greater Persia. And they were praising God (2) for all that they had seen.

OTHER MIRACLES OF MAR ASIA

And also the holy (3) Mar Asia was circulating around (4) Antioch. And he passed through a certain town (5) and found a woman who had drunk a lot of wine (6) and was sleeping. And a small snake came and entered (7) her mouth, and was growing in her stomach, and becoming (8) very large. And she was suffering from it (9) terribly. And she came and fell upon the feet (10) of the holy Mar Asia, and she was weeping. (11) And the holy Mar Asia took the balm and the water, (12) and he blessed them and gave them to her, and she drank (them). And (13) in due time the snake the snake descended and left (14) her stomach. And everyone who saw or heard (of it) praised God (15) because of this miracle. And he was also in (16) another country which was known as a country of merchants³⁸. And there was [22B] (1) in it there was a wicked beast, and wreaking great havoc among the people, so that (2) from morning until nine o'clock no one (3) was able to go out of his home. And when they heard (4) the news about the holy Mar Asia, the people of the country (5) all gathered together and came to him. And they were

37) The word *فاتور* is apparently the Aramaic word *פתור* which appears in the Targumim with the meaning of "table." Nau (op. cit., p. 19) interprets the phrase "table of life" to mean the altar.

38) NAU, *Résumé*, p. 19 says Tagra was the name of the country, but Syriac *tgra* also means "merchant" or "merchants", so I am not sure why he preferred to see that word as a proper name.

sad (6) (and) weeping. And they spoke to him about the evil monster, (7) and about its devastation. And the holy Mar Asia (8) took the balm and the water, and he blessed them (9) and gave it to them. And he said, "Go look from (10) where it is that it comes to you. Take this water and (11) make the sign of the crucifix, and gather together, all of you, in that (12) night and place it vigilantly and prayerfully (13) before God. And I have hope in God that it will not (14) bother you again". Then all the people went (15) and did as the holy Mar Asia had [23A](1) said to them. And when it was morning they found the monster (2) cast down, and he was split from his head to (3) his tail. And they praised God, all who were present, (4) for that miracle. And also a certain (5) woman came to him from that country. (6) And she had an excess of water, and she threw herself (7) before the feet of the holy Mar Asia. (8) And she was weeping bitterly. And the holy (9) Mar Asia had pity on her. And he took the balm and the water, (10) and prayed over them and gave them to her. And she drank (it) and was healed (11) of her affliction. And she praised God who (12) had given her the cure. And after that, the holy (13) Mar Asia thought in his heart to (14) go to the country of Aqlodia³⁹, because it was (15) devastated in those days, and there were (16) many solitary monks inhabiting it. [23B](1) And he intended to stay for a while in that country(2) where there were high (and) very difficult mountains (3) around him. And when he entered into the country (4) of Aqlodia, the hermit monks who lived there rejoiced (5) over him. And the monasteries (6) were also there and places of relics (lit. "bones"). And (7) the holy Mar Asia was circulating among the (relic) places (8) and the monasteries, and visiting all the hermits (9) who were in them. And the holy one rejoiced when (10) he saw it, because he desired to take comfort in (11) those monasteries, and he missed the worship, and he would hurry (12) to them and would teach them the best behavior, (13) and would say that no one should stray from his meditation, (14) and should not travel to see the sinful hypocrites. (15) And the holy Mar Asia was (engaged) in mighty (16) works and asceticism and serious, stringent [24A](1) meditation. And he was teaching the same things (2) after he settled in that country for a long (3) time.

39) This is the female name "Claudia", but also the name of a place in Armenia Minor (see PAYNE-SMITH, *Thesaurus*, sub *qlodia*).

THE FINAL DAYS OF MAR ASIA

The king Theodosius the Great⁴⁰ (4) sent letters to the holy Mar (5) Asia (asking) that he come to him on account of (6) his daughter, because she was being tormented by (7) Satan, and also (because) he wanted to see him (8) and be blessed by him. And the holy Mar Asia (9) was not able to refuse an order of the king. (10) And he said farewell to his brethren, the monks, (11) all of them. And he said to them, “Remain in peace, (12) Oh my brethren. And pray for me, because the letters (13) of the kings are not ignored and I am in a great (14) hurry. May the peace of our Lord be with you (15) forever. Amen”. And he set off with the king’s soldiers (16) quickly. And when they intended to set out on [24B](1) the road, the holy Mar Asia, the remarkable man, (2) spoke up and said, “My children, you are emissaries (3) (and) you know that I am not able (4) to travel with you so quickly. But you go on (5) and I will come alone according to my strength”. (6) And the amicable saint only said that (7) so that he would not be a (subject) of discussion for them, and (so that) he would not be hindered (8) from service to God. And also so that he would not (9) have any (special) honor or respect among them. And he had (10) forbidden them to tell anyone about him. (11) But as for the soldiers, they would not leave him, but they took him (12) with them and traveled along the road. And when (13) they arrived in “Rome” (i.e. Constantinople) they drew near the city (14) which is called Nicomedia⁴¹. The people (15) of that city knew of him, and rejoiced over him (16) greatly. And they brought to him many [25A](1) diseases of every type: the feeble-minded and the downtrodden and those bound (2) by Satan. He healed all of them and discharged them. And they asked (3) him, (viz.) the faithful, and the priests, and their elders, and the heads (4) of the city, to stay with them a few days. (5) But he did not chose to, because the decree of the king was urgent. (6) And then all the people went out and bid him farewell in respect and dignity. And (7) when they arrived at the seashore, (8) it was revealed to the holy Mar Asia from (9) God by the hand of an angel, concerning his exit from the world. (10) And the angel said to him, “go to the king and (then) return (11) to your monastery which you built in Antioch, because the time

40) Theodosius the Great was born about 346 AD and died in 395. He was made emperor of the East in January 379. He had two sons, Arcadius and Honorius, and a daughter, Pulcheria. In view of the known dates of Theodosius, this pericope of Mar Asia would have to be placed in the time between 379 and 395.

41) This was the capital of Bithynia, and a place where many Christians were martyred under the Diocletian persecutions in 303 AD.

(12) of your exit from this world has been determined, so that you might move on (13) to Eternal Life”. Then the holy one arose (14) and returned to his monastery and stayed in the monastery nine days. (15) And after that he fell ill and lingered for three days. And (then) he moved on (16) from this transient world into the rest of his Kingdom (17) we ask the Lord to call us to dwell in his place, and God will help us (18) in the deliverance of our souls. Amen.

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